



Army Hearing Program

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UNCLASSIFIED





Army Hearing Program



Briefing Outline

PURPOSE: To provide information about the Army Hearing Program to include recent policy changes

1. Current Scope of the Problem
2. Army Hearing Policy
3. Army Hearing Program: Components
4. Road-ahead
5. Summary



Army Hearing Program



Current Scope of the Problem

- Cultural Mindset Regarding Hearing Loss
- Lack of Clearly Defined Roles
 - Combat Support Hospital (CSH)
 - SRC Platforms (MEDDAC)
 - MEDCEN
- Minimum Standard of Hearing Care
 - Across COMPOs (Active Duty, Army Reserve and National Guard)
- Resources
- Current Trends



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Post-Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA)

Compo 1 Army

(March 2003 thru September 2007)

Army	Noise Symptoms/Exposur es	Number YES	Percent YES
PDHA N- 365,322	Dizziness	46,076	13
	Ringling	58,511	16
	Exposure to noise	274,488	75
	Vibration	149,028	41

Analysis performed by the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center
Data Source: Defense Medical Surveillance System, 24 March 2008



Post-deployment Hearing Surveys

- Soldiers surveyed report decreased hearing as a result of deployment:
 - 27% of 1st XXX
 - 21% of 3rd XXX
 - 25% of 6th XXX
 - 25% of 8th XXX



Post-deployment Hearing Surveys

- Soldiers report problems with noise:
 - 35% report decreased communication ability in noise
 - 29% report noise contributed to increased stress and loss of sleep
 - 33% report their living/dining/sleep areas to be noise hazardous



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Army Hearing Policy

- Defense Occupational Environmental Health Readiness System-Hearing Conservation (DOEHRS-HC)
- Baseline DOEHRS-HC Audiogram
 - Initial Entry Training
- Annual DOEHRS-HC Audiogram
- Termination/Separation DOEHRS-HC Audiogram
- Annual Hearing Education
- Annual Hearing Protection Check
- Pre-deployment DOEHRS-HC Audiogram
- Post-deployment DOEHRS-HC Audiogram



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Army Hearing Policy

Pre-deployment

- Personnel Policy Guidance for Contingency Operations in Support of GWOT, 16 June 2006
 - DOEHRS-HC Audiogram within 12 months of deployment
 - Fit, train and issue combat arms earplugs with carrying case
 - DD Form 2795 (Pre Deployment Health Assessment)

Post-deployment

- ALARACT 003/2009, Jan 09
 - Active Duty – DOEHRS-HC audiogram within 6 months of redeployment
 - National Guard and US Army Reserve – DOEHRS-HC audiogram prior to Release from Active Duty (REFRAD)
- DD Form 2796 (Post Deployment Health Assessment) Jan 2008
 - Trouble hearing
 - Ringing in the ears
 - Dizziness
 - Blast Exposures
- ST 4-02.501, Army Hearing Program, Feb 2008



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Army Hearing Program: Components

1. Hearing Readiness

- Hearing injury prevention (Health education and hearing protection)
- Hearing readiness monitoring

2. Clinical Hearing Services

- Clinical practice hearing guidelines
- Hearing injury evaluation/treatment

3. Operational Hearing Services

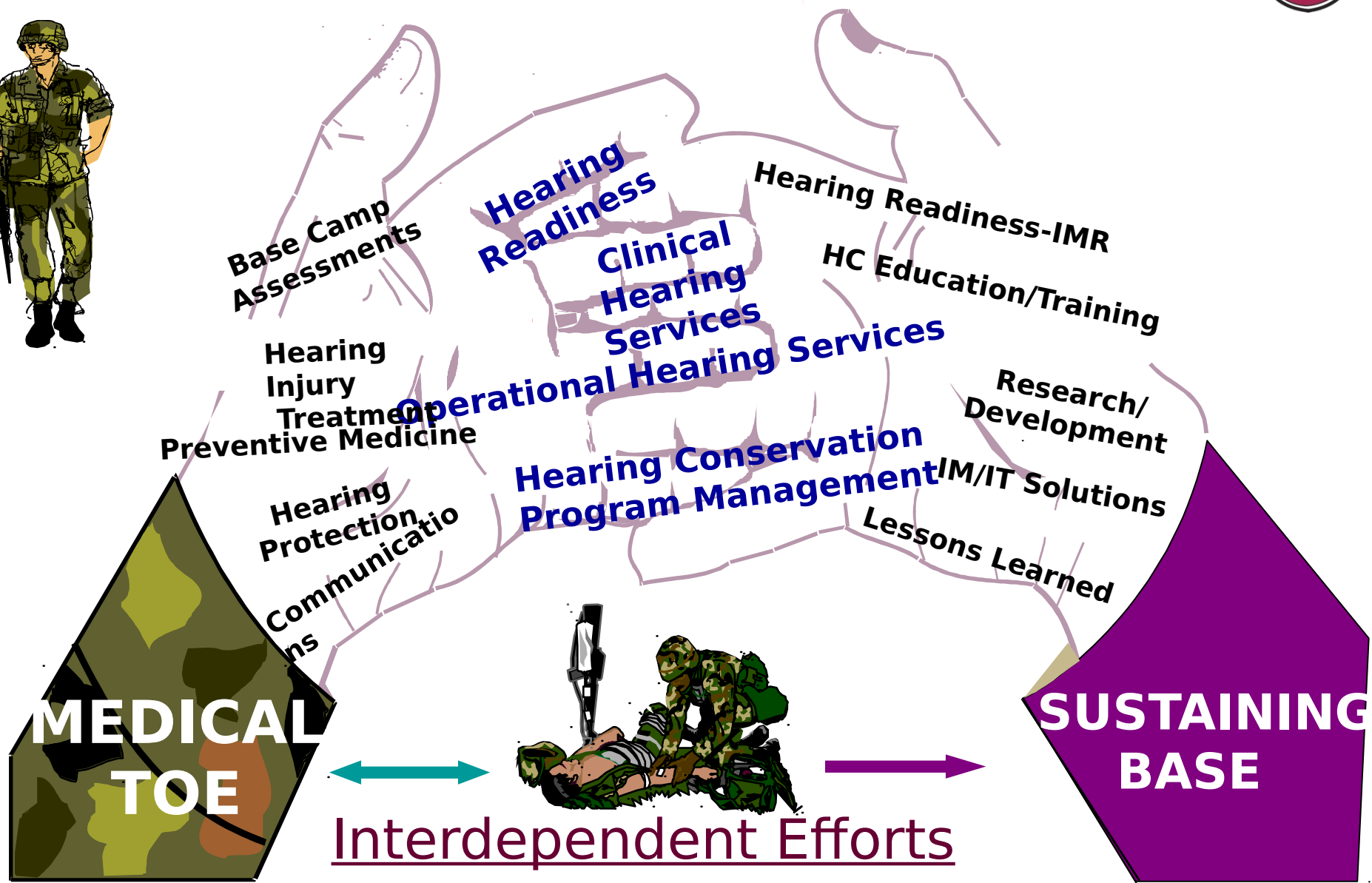
- Tactical Communication and Protection Systems
- Noise Monitoring and Control

4. Hearing Conservation

******TOE mission should mirror Garrison/training mission *****



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Hearing Readiness

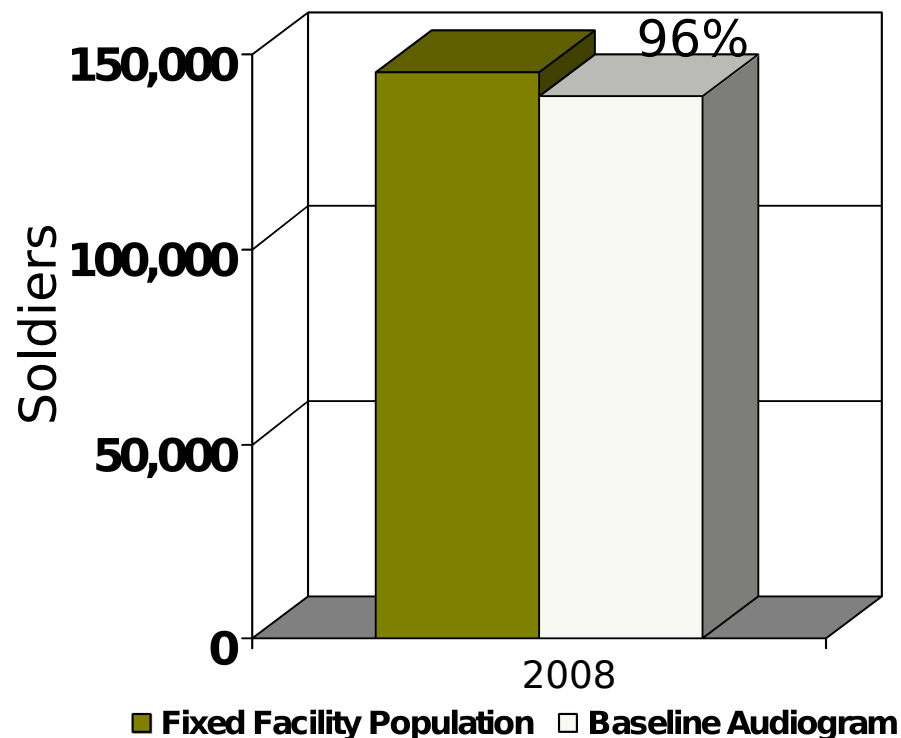
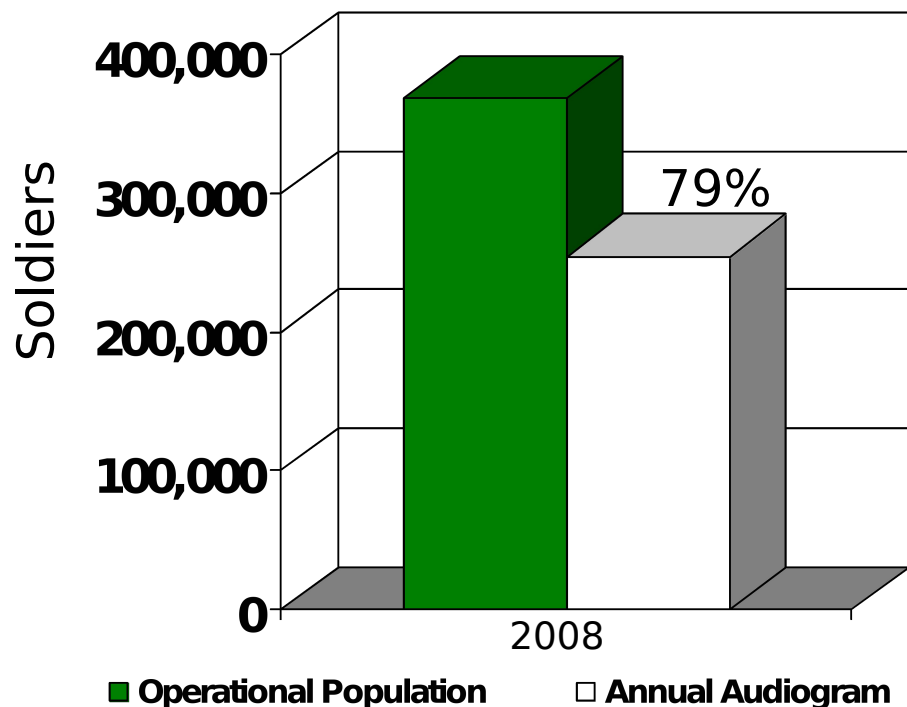
- Routinely noise exposed military and civilian personnel are required to have an annual DOEHRS-HC audiogram (DD2216)
 - Operational forces (TO&E)
- All military personnel are required to have a reference and termination audiogram (DD2215 and DD2216)
 - Fixed facility personnel (TDA)
- DOEHRS-DR and MEDPROS interface determines overall compliance
 - DOEHRS-DR provides audiogram data
 - MEDPROS provides the noise exposed population data (denominator)



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Hearing Readiness Compliance Operational (TO&E) vs Fixed Facility (TDA)



Source: MEDPROS Hearing Readiness Module, 21 Mar 08



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Road Ahead

- Develop a Strategic Communications Plan
 - Knowledge Sharing Strategies
 - Execution of Hearing Policy
 - Evaluation and Treatment Protocols
- Develop Clearly Defined Audiologist Role on the TBI Multi-Disciplinary Team
- Bridge the Gap Between DoD and VA Hearing Healthcare Delivery
 - Compensation and Pension Exams
 - Bi-directional data sharing of hearing evaluations



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Summary

- The Army Hearing Program ensures Soldiers are provided hearing services in all environments
- MEDPROS hearing readiness module accurately determines unit hearing readiness compliance
- The Army Hearing Program will greatly reduce needless noise-induced hearing loss for today's and future Soldiers



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Questions



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Hearing Readiness -IMR

- **TSG approved Army hearing readiness metric, May 04**
- **Hearing Readiness Module in MEDPROS**
 - DOEHRS-DR interface for audiogram data
 - Classification based upon most recent audiogram (either DD Form 2215 or DD Form 2216 completed within 12 months)
- **Track Army Hearing Readiness**
 - Command drill down reporting in MEDPROS
 - Individual Hearing Readiness
- **Army Knowledge Online**
 - My hearing readiness



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Hearing Readiness Status

Hearing Class 1 and 2: (Fully Medically Ready)	
Hearing Class 3: (Not Medically Ready)	
Hearing Class 4: (Undetermined)	

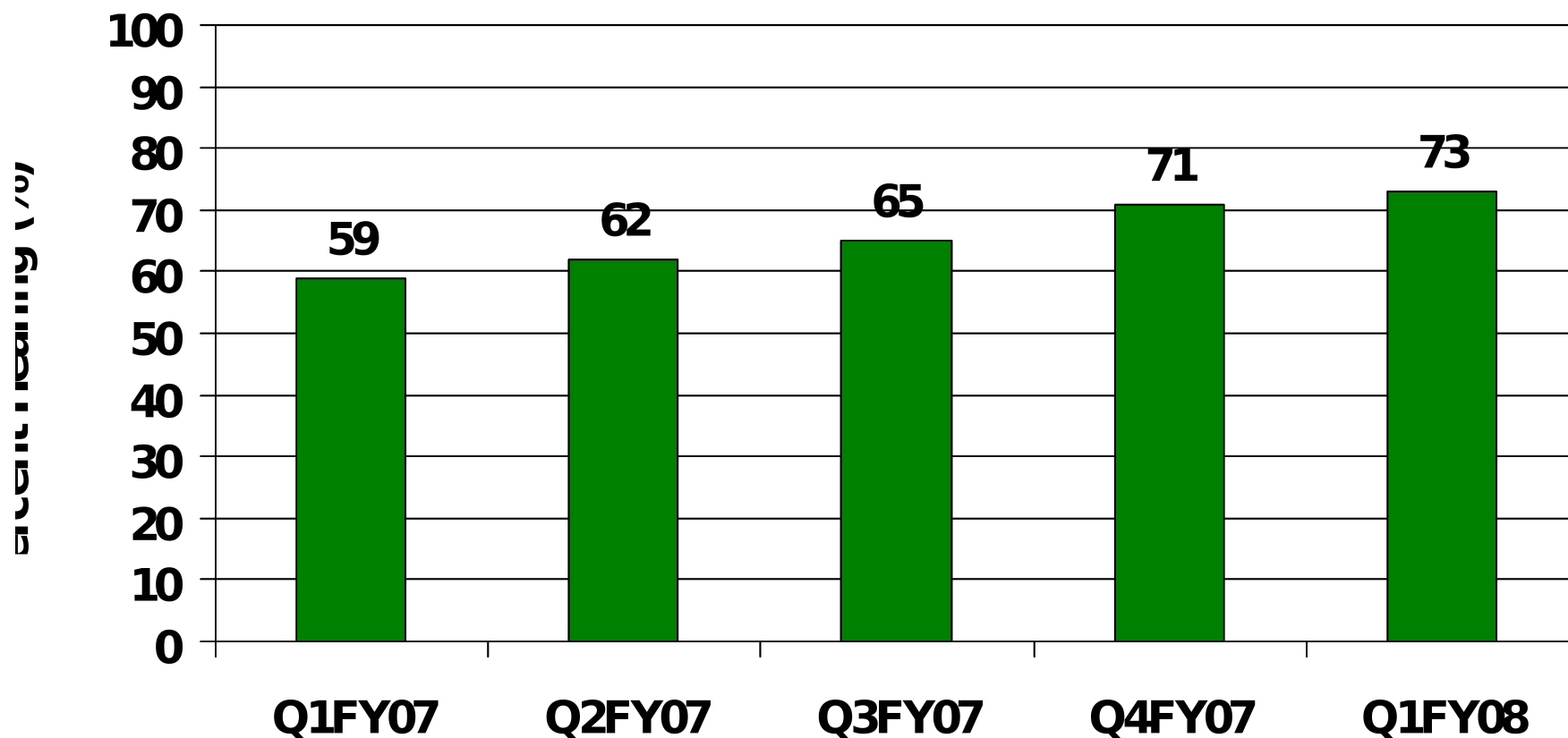


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Percent Fully Medically Hearing Ready

■ Army-wide





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Hearing and Military Operations

- **Potential consequences of hearing loss on...**
 - Listening Posts
 - Point on Patrol
 - Call for Fire (Note: most fratricide occurs as a result of miscommunication not poor plotting or poor calculations)
 - Urban Warfare



Call for Fire

Without TCAPS 🔊

With TCAPS = 🔊



Army Hearing Program

Operational Hearing Services



- **Good hearing increases Soldier survivability and lethality**
 - Impact of hearing loss on military operations is often under estimated
 - Effective battlefield communication requires good hearing
 - The enemy is often heard before they are seen
- **Tactical Communication and Protection System (TCAPS) devices**
 - Integrates communication and hearing protection
 - Increases auditory situational awareness in combat
 - Effective communication during the heat of battle

